

CHAPTER SIX

THE LAND USE PLAN

A. GENERAL CONCEPTS

The Land Use Plan for the City of Sugar Land should incorporate all applicable City of Sugar Land's adopted Goals, Objectives, and Strategies of Chapter 5. These community values provide guidance for the City's desired growth, development, and redevelopment.

In the past, the City has grown through the annexation of developed Municipal Utility Districts, a practice that has lead to a pattern of Master Planned Communities. Due to changes in economics, the resulting need to focus on sustainability, and an increased interest to further ensure a continuation of quality development, the City has expressed its intention to annex undeveloped land, thereby gaining the most effective means to provide the community with orderly growth and development.

Sugar Land's residential areas are expected to remain primarily single family residential in nature. There may be some limited areas set aside to meet a recent trend toward smaller lot sizes and a mix of clustered or attached single family residential. Additionally, more urban owner-occupied residences at higher densities, condominiums or townhomes, may be anticipated within mixed use and commercial areas.

The City is striving to remain economically stable. The new Land Use Plan will need to incorporate additional acreage for economic development purposes, such as commercial, office, and Research and Development to ensure a sustainable mix.

Future infill development, redevelopment, and new development should not adversely impact existing infrastructure. Any recommendations for development within this chapter are made with the assumption that impacts will be addressed through code compliance and impact mitigation practices. All existing and proposed infrastructure should be brought up to standards with future development.

B. LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The following use classifications will be used on the Land Use Plan:

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single family homes on individually owned lots at suburban densities (generally between two acre minimum lots and up to six units per acre; however, typical Sugar Land single densities tend to fall between three and four dwelling units an acre).

Also includes:

Rural residential (two acre lots and greater)

MEDIUM DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single family homes that are not stacked but may have common side walls; densities are typically higher, or may be concentrated within one portion of a development, leaving open space in another area

Also includes:

Single family homes on lots that are smaller than most conventional suburban lots

Zero-lot line single family homes

Condominiums (not stacked)

Cluster homes

Patio homes

Townhomes

ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL

Typically stacked dwelling units where the entire development is either entirely owner-occupied or entirely rental in nature

Includes:

Duplexes

Triplexes

Fourplexes

Condominiums (both stacked and not stacked)

Apartment complexes

Dormitories

PLANNED RESIDENTIAL

A mix of residential housing styles that vary in densities, but where the highest densities are concentrated near commercial or other uses that could be considered incompatible with single family uses. The densities should step down approaching lower intensity land uses. Residential developments of this type should result in a master planned district to ensure adequate buffering and ensure a predetermined density specific to the area. The design of the layout should encourage homeownership.

Includes:

Single family

Zero-lot line single family

Condominiums (both stacked and not stacked)

Cluster homes

Patio homes

Townhomes

Live/Work Townhomes

OFFICE/SERVICE

Office uses and professional services

Includes:

Corporate headquarters

Financial Services

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES/RETAIL

Limited commercial uses that typically serve a neighborhood where the scale is kept at a neighborhood level.

Note: Future neighborhood services/retail locations are not shown on the Land Use Plan because the Plan is not intended to address specific parcels, only general areas of appropriate uses. Future neighborhood service/retail locations should meet the design standards, but a proliferation of commercial corners should be avoided.

RETAIL COMMERCIAL

All commercial but no industrial or R&D uses

MIXED USE – RESIDENTIAL/RETAIL

Planned developments that include commercial and residential uses, either within the same block or within the same building. May include mid-rise residential uses and parking garages. Any of these uses could be either individual buildings within a development or within the same building.

MIXED USE – RETAIL/R&D

Planned developments that include primarily Research and Development, company headquarters, light assembly, and light industrial uses (see below) with supporting retail uses. May include mid-rise residential uses and parking garages. Any of these uses could be either individual buildings within a development or within the same building.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Uses such as those described in the City of Sugar Land Target Industry Study.

These include:

Biomedical/Life Sciences R&D

Energy related industry

Specialty Electronics

HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

Manufacturing uses that typically emit substantial smoke, odors, and/or noise, and that have a high impact on surrounding uses and on the visual quality of the area they are located within.

PARKS/OPEN/BUFFERS

Areas that are officially set aside to provide green space within the corporate limits.

Includes:

Public and private parks

Greenways

Golf courses

Off-road walking trails and bike paths

Regional detention ponds that have been designed as amenities

Brazos River Corridor

Country Clubs

WATERWAYS

Floodways and other watercourses.

Includes:

Natural creek and river beds

Oxbow lakes

Ponds

Man-made water features

PUBLIC

Includes:

Churches

Public and private schools

Government buildings

Libraries

C. DESIGN GUIDELINES

Mobility

Mobility is a priority for the City. The Design Standards and the Development Code have been amended over the years to provide the tools necessary to ensure that development does not deteriorate the roadway system below an acceptable level of service. The Design Standards include, but are not limited to access management practices, traffic impact analysis requirements along with mitigation measures that shall be utilized to maintain a required level of service. The Development Code specifies the intersection level of service requirements that must be maintained in order to maintain the quality of life in the community as development occurs. All regulations related to access and level of service should be strictly adhered to, and additional mitigating factors as recommended in a traffic impact analysis should be followed. Variances to standards should only be granted if no other reasonable alternatives are available to an applicant.

Neighborhoods

The focal point of Sugar Land's neighborhoods remains the *elementary school*. Surrounding the schools are single family homes serviced by discontinuous residential streets. Collector streets provide access from the residential streets to the arterials, which, in turn, feed the Freeways. For the most part the neighborhoods in Sugar Land are identified with subdivisions containing between 350 and 500 homes.

As future neighborhoods are developed special attention should be given to the following design elements:

- To the maximum extent feasible, arterials or greater thoroughfares should not bisect a subdivision - they should be at the edge.
- Collector streets serving single family areas should be designed to minimize the incidence of traffic filtering into residential neighborhoods and to deter speeding. This should be enforced with traffic controls and geometric design.

- Access to multi-family developments should be in accordance with subdivision standards providing direct access to collector streets which in turn should provide convenient access to arterial roadways or highways/freeways.
- Commercial and retail uses should be limited to the convenience goods and services appropriate to the immediate neighborhood such as laundry pick-up, convenience stores, day care, barber and beauty shops, video rentals, and the like. These are appropriate at the intersection of collector streets or at collector and arterial intersections.
- Drainage channels and detention ponds should be located to allow joint use as green belts, hike and bike trails, and as alternate routes to and from schools, parks and recreation facilities. Where appropriate, easements obtained for such uses should have carefully worded legal instruments that will provide for flexibility of use in the future.

Planned Residential

The City of Houston and the surrounding areas have begun to experience revitalization in certain areas through infill development and redevelopment near popular shopping and cultural amenities. The result is usually higher density residential products of high value and quality with a pedestrian orientation. The City of Sugar Land has recently attracted developers interested in bringing these types of development, as evidenced in the approved Lake Pointe General Plan.

Any areas proposed for a mix of residential uses should be developed subsequent to the Planned Development District (PD) rezoning process; density and quality can be addressed at the time of the rezoning. Each PD should also address landscaping, signage, parking, building finish, buffering, and screening requirements. At this time, the City has elected to respond to planned residential development as it is proposed on a case-by-case basis rather than designate future areas on the Land Use Plan. Therefore the only vacant acreage shown as planned residential on the Future Land Use Plan Map are those that have been previously approved on a developer's General Plan.

Typical conventional apartment development, of the type seen in apartment complexes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, etc. are specifically excluded from this category and should not be included in the ultimate development of any property reflected as "planned residential" on the Land Use Plan. The separation guidelines as laid out in the following section (Townhomes/Condominiums/Apartments) should not apply to areas reflected as Planned Residential on the Land Use Plan.

Townhouses/Condominiums/Apartments

The low density character of the City of Sugar Land has been established through many years of planning and sensitive development. Since its inception as a family oriented community the citizens have repeatedly voiced a desire to enhance their neighborhood atmosphere and community values. The proven advantages of single family

neighborhoods over high density multi-unit dwelling forms has led to Sugar Land retaining its highly desirable small town atmosphere.

The city recognizes the need for a number of housing choices, including multi-units, to provide for the needs of new households, for temporary residences for families moving to the city, for those who desire the convenience of housing without maintenance, and for those that cannot afford to purchase single family homes. Architectural style, bulk, height and design are of critical importance when blending these uses into neighborhoods. Street facades should resemble single family houses, yards and drives should be similar to adjoining single family properties and signage should be consistent to surrounding neighborhoods.

As much as possible these higher density developments should be designed as an integral part of the neighborhood. This should be accomplished by limiting the highest density to no more than twenty units to the acre, a maximum of no more than two hundred units at any one location, and no more than three hundred such units within any one square mile of the City. The limitation on units per square mile will be implemented by using a circle that has a 3,000 foot radius that can be moved surrounding the proposed development to determine the concentration within any one square mile in the City and ETJ. In addition, such developments (apartments, condominiums, townhouses and other group residential uses) should be dispersed throughout the community to avoid undue concentration of population. This should be accomplished by spacing developments to ensure a balance in each location of single family residences and multi-unit dwellings. Further, the location should provide for at least 1/2 mile separation of multi-unit dwelling developments.

The general plans for neighborhoods should specifically design open space and recreation facilities to serve all the residents of all types of dwelling units.

In specific terms multi-unit dwelling developments should be planned and designed as part of each neighborhood in which they are proposed rather than as peripheral uses isolated from the activity and vitality of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Convenience Centers

These facilities are intended to serve the daily needs of an individual neighborhood. They should be located at intersections of collector streets or collector/arterials. Operations would be consistent with normal residential hours and large sign or displays are inappropriate.

Shopping Centers

These facilities are intended to serve a larger area, up to six square miles and generally contain up to 400,000 square feet of space. The Williams Trace Shopping Center is a good example of such a center. Because of their size, they should be located on arterials or greater. Access to these centers should be determined through technical analysis to preserve the safety and progression of the adjacent public streets. Access management practices, safety and preservation of a high level of service to the transportation network should be a priority.

Schools

A traffic impact analysis should always be performed for a proposed school campus or a major renovation to an existing campus. The technical analysis will be able to minimize the impact of the school on the adjacent streets while providing the greatest safety routes for the students. The analysis will also be able to determine the proper traffic control for the area, the proper pavement geometrics and the most efficient internal circulation within the campus to minimize overflow and adverse impacts to the public rights-of-way.

Elementary schools should be located at the intersection of collector streets with the access driveways being located off of the collector street. The traffic generated by these facilities exceeds the normal capacity of residential streets. Schools should not be located on arterials or highways/freeways in order to provide maximum protection to children and to lessen congestion on those streets. High schools and middle schools should be located in a campus setting with access from a collector to an internal street and parking system.

Churches

These facilities may be located on either collector or greater streets, but should not be situated such that primary access requires using residential streets. A technical analysis should be performed for the larger churches to ensure safety, the practice of access management, and the preservation of a high level of service to the adjacent transportation network.

Industrial

With the exception of the Imperial and Ondeo Nalco sites, there are no heavy industrial uses within the City of Sugar Land, and the City does not anticipate the siting of future heavy industrial uses. The Imperial site has recently ceased all operations and is not promoting the property for heavy industrial use. Conversely, the Nalco site is expected to continue operations into the foreseeable future. The Planning and Zoning Commission has expressed an interest to allow the redevelopment of that site as a less intense commercial use if the current use ceases operations. Therefore no future heavy industrial use is shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Light industrial such as the uses that we currently have within the City's Business Park, or mixed use office/R&D, should be developed with particular attention to buffer areas that will transition between those uses and any residential use. Buffers should involve natural or manmade separations, the width of which are determined based on the relative impact of the proposed buildings on the residential areas. These buffers should be specified either within a new zoning district or through the PD process.

D. MAP OF FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan begins with a base map that shows existing or recently approved land uses that are either 1) in their final zoning classification, or 2) covered by an approved

General Plan. These “givens” are shown on Figure #___. That map leaves vacant the areas where a determination is needed regarding the City’s preference of uses. The result was seven decision areas. Pursuant to Phase I of the public input that was sought, Staff made recommendations on 4 of the 7 Decision Areas, leaving areas 4, 5, and 6 for further discussion. This draft report describes those infill areas, discusses the influencing area characteristics, and lays out potential land use alternative options.

AREA 1



Area 1 is the City’s Mixed Use Conservation (MUC) district. The existing Land Use Plan, which was adopted in 1993, reflects the area to be Research/Industrial. Discussions regarding the area that have occurred more since the adoption of the 1993 plan focused on the transitional nature of the area. Market conditions had created pressure for commercial uses, which conflicted with a desire to preserve the historic and residential character of the area.

The properties in question have been zoned MUC since the adoption of Ordinance No. 1063 on September 23, 1997. Based on internal documentation and testimony of current city staff, the creation of this district was driven by residential property owners’ desire to protect the houses in what was zoned Office District (O-1 as of September 25, 1995), from commercial development. Several attempts to preserve the residential structures and place controls on commercial development had been made prior to creating this district. Below is a chronicle of action taken by the City Council in an attempt to address those concerns:

1996 (May 7) Ordinance No. 1002: Moratorium on accepting applications for building permits for construction or alterations of any building other than Single Family residential use

(October 15) Ordinance No. 1027: Continuation of Moratorium

- 1997 (February 18) Ordinance No. 1040: Continuation of Moratorium
- (August 5) Ordinance No. 1051: Continuation of Moratorium
- (September 23) Ordinance No. 1063: Adoption of New Development Code and creation of MUC (which extends south along Brooks Street into the residential area)
- 1999 (Summer) City Council directed Planning staff to review the MUC boundaries and to suggest potential changes to those boundaries. At the August 10, 1999 P&Z meeting, the Planning staff recommended that the area adjacent to HWY 90A and the area along Matlage Way be zoned for B-O. No action was taken on this recommendation.
- (September 28) Ordinance No. 1201: 1. Land Use Matrix amended to permit a wider range of uses in the MUC: 2. All new construction requiring a building permit became subject to the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process.

These discussions resulted in the creation of the MUC zoning district, which allows both residential and a limited amount of light commercial uses with an attempt to mitigate potential negative impacts and encourage preservation through the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process. A CUP is generally considered an effective tool to allow surrounding property owners to provide input into the approval process through the public hearings. The decision makers (in our case, the City Council with a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission) have the authority to incorporate mitigating conditions into the development. However, a CUP is not effective where preservation is the true goal of a regulation because there are little to no standards or guidelines provided for the ultimate decision makers. There is no prohibition on demolition. Our discussions with the public and the Commission centered on whether there should be clarification and additional direction regarding the City's goal for the area.

There are public, office/service, and low impact commercial uses currently existing and acting as a transition area between the regional commercial uses at the Highway 90A and Highway 6 intersection and the residential areas of Brookside/Belknap, Venetian Estates, Alkire, and Sugar Lakes. There are a few single family homes still in residential use among the other homes that are transitioning to low impact commercial uses on the west side of Brooks south of Guenther. Most of the property along Matlage Way is used for public uses (park, post office, city offices, fire station).

Three of the tracts, the new Credit Union site on the southwest corner of Brooks and Guenther, as well as the former Imperial Sugar support center between Guenther and Brooks, were recently rezoned to B-O due to the limitations of the MUC use regulations. A request for B-2 for the former Palm Theater site on the southeast corner of HWY 90A and Guenther was denied in favor of a B-O designation. The B-2 was considered too

intense for the nature of the remaining MUC district and from a traffic generation standpoint.

In the future, the MUC district regulations may need to be reexamined as part of a future neighborhood enhancement study of the City's older neighborhoods. Changes to add additional reasonable commercial uses, to provide additional standards, and perhaps to add more effective preservation regulations could be considered.

Public input:

Responders generally expressed an interest in a continuation of the current intent of the MUC district. There did not seem to be interest in strengthening the ordinance language.

Options for the MUC zoned lots north of Guenther

Options include the following:

1. Keep the MUC designation and redraft the district regulations.
2. Allow rezoning to B-O.
3. Allow rezoning to B-2.

Options for the MUC zoned lots south of Guenther

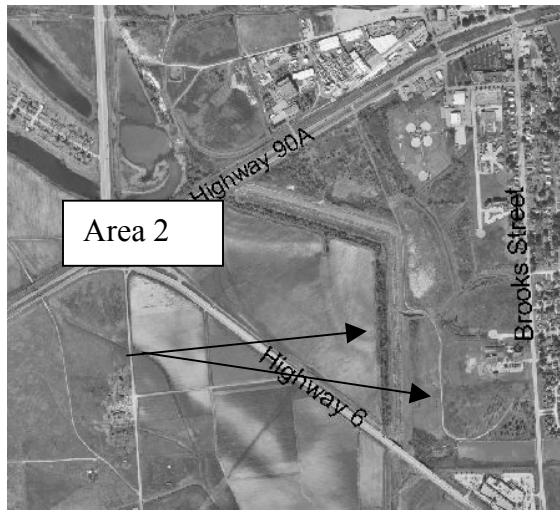
Options include the following:

1. Keep the MUC designation and redraft district regulations.
2. Allow rezoning to B-O.
3. Allow rezoning to B-1.

Recommendations:

Keep the MUC and B-O designations as they are currently shown. There is currently no interest in redrafting the MUC district or add an overlay district to the entire Area 1 to incorporate more effective provisions to preserve the character of the area. Encourage the continuation of public uses, and those uses compatible with public uses, along Matlage Way.

AREA 2



Area 2 is located between University Boulevard and Memorial Hermann Hospital. Ditch H runs through the middle of the area. The eastern half of the area is a wetland (Char Lake) and is owned by the City. The entire Highway 6 frontage, including adjoining properties to the north up to Highway 90A and to the south up to the Highway 59 intersection, is reflected as office/service on the existing Land Use Plan. The abutting property and the western half of Area 2 were rezoned PD a few years ago. The PD discussions included the intention that some of the future pad sites should develop as B-O type uses rather than the more intense B-2; however, no specific ratios were identified in the final ordinance that rezoned the property. Instead, the list of permitted uses includes mostly office type uses, but several retail uses are listed as conditional uses, presumably to allow the potential to limit certain sites to office/service on a case-by-case basis. One conditional use permit for a restaurant was approved for the Willie's Ice House.

About 2/3 of the property within the area is vacant. Developed properties include Willie's Ice House and the Chase and Texas State Banks. There is also a medical office building under construction along University Boulevard. Discussions during the rezoning case included a desire to retain some exclusively office uses to provide a buffer to the residential areas to the east. The development trend for the area tends to attract a variety of retail uses in addition to financial and medical offices.

Options for Area 2

Options include the following:

1. City initiate rezoning of the remaining PD to B-O.
2. Keep existing PD mix.
3. Allow rezoning to B-2.

Public Input:

We received input that the infill area in and around the Planned Development District should allow general retail uses rather than reserving all or a portion of the area for exclusively office uses.

Recommendation:

Allow the continuation of the development pattern of the tract west of Ditch H as financial, office, and retail. Allow the retail uses that are conditional uses if all site development features are in character with the existing development of the area.

AREA 3

Area 3 is the inner portion of the Fluor Daniel property that is currently zoned B-O and PD, roughly half of which remains vacant. The Land Use Plan shows the entire Fluor property, including the outer tracts lining HWY 6 and HWY 59, as office/service. However, all of the adjoining outer tracts have been rezoned to B-2, allowing for more intense uses than the B-O zoning would have permitted. The developed portions include office and R&D type uses. The existing development is more of a campus, with well-landscaped parking lots that are served by pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The property is discussed in the City of Sugar Land Target Industry Study, which identifies the Fluor property to be conducive for office/service uses, R&D, and light manufacturing.

Earlier this year, the City approved a General Plan for the property, which shows general commercial uses along the frontages; residential uses intended for infill urban style development in the two northern “ears”; and a mix of office, commercial, and urban density residential uses transitioning between the commercial and residential areas. A development agreement accompanied the approval of the General Plan. The developer, area residents, and City officials understand that the residential portions north of Creek Bend Drive will be rezoned as a Planned Development District, giving the developer some flexibility of design, and allowing certain development criteria related to density, housing style, and quality to be established through the zoning process. The zoning process was triggered recently with the submittal of a PD rezoning for the first few phases of the residential areas. The current infrastructure would need to be upgraded to handle the increased impacts that such development would have on utilities and the interior and adjacent traffic system.

Public input:

Respondents expressed an interest in a transition area on the Fluor property that would allow it to continue to build out with current uses, but that would keep periphery buildings low. In the past, the owners of the Fluor property had agreed with the neighboring residents to restrict building heights in certain areas across from Oyster Bay and Sugar Lakes. These residents requested that these agreements be formalized through any future PD amendments. Brookside/ Belknap, and Hall Lake residents would like the same provisions in the areas across from these subdivisions. There was also concern about possible increased drainage problems and an increase in traffic accessing Sugar Lakes Drive.

Recommendation:

Allow high density single family, such as townhome and patio homes, on the areas north of Fluor Daniel Drive if Fluor Daniel is upgraded to meet collector standards. Greater residential heights that exceed typical single family development should be designed, oriented, and located such that they preserve the privacy of neighboring single family development.

Potential negative drainage and traffic impacts that are directly caused development by should be addressed through the development process, when compliance with the City's drainage and street design standards is triggered. Any existing drainage problems should be addressed at a more regional level that takes all of the contributing factors into account.

AREAS 4A, 4B, AND 5





Tract 3, Nalco, and the Imperial Sugar areas need additional policy direction, which will eventually come from the City Council upon recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission. In order to reach a decision regarding the ultimate land uses, many factors should be taken into consideration, including property owner plans, citizen input, and staff recommendations.

Four separate scenarios were originally shown on maps for discussion purposes. Three additional scenarios were prepared pursuant to the Phase III public input period. The scenarios are intended to be broadly conceptual, reflecting a range of land use possibilities. The scenarios are discussed after the descriptions of the three decision areas.

Economic Development

The City Council has identified a number of specific goals for the City among which are the goals of Sugar Land becoming a “Regional Employment Center” and a “Balanced Tax Base”. To achieve these objectives will require that the City maintain or increase the amount of commercial property available in the City for development. Additionally, as a part of its economic development efforts, the City undertook a target industry assessment to 1) review the remaining tracts of undeveloped property in the City for compatibility with business development and 2) set a priority of industries the City should pursue to maximize the impact on the City. Tract 3 is one of the four areas that were studied in the Target Industry Report, which was presented to Council in January 2003. The report identified the tract as a good location for retail commercial, office and light industrial uses. The development of Tract 3 with a major commercial (non-retail) component becomes a necessity, given the Council objectives, the proximity of the Tract 3 to the Sugar Land Regional Airport, the limited remaining property in the Sugar Land Business Park, and the recent reduction of available commercial property on the Fluor site.

Mobility

On the Thoroughfare Plan, the City has identified a need for an arterial system to relieve increasing traffic problems on Burney Road. On a very conceptual level, the Thoroughfare Plan shows an arterial coming off of Burney Road just north of the Jess Pirtle intersection to connect with Highway 90A across from the future University Boulevard connection. The Plan also shows another arterial coming off of that arterial and connecting with Highway 6 across from the Sugar Land Regional Airport entrance. Last year, the City Council reviewed two potential alignments that give more detail regarding the possible future location of that arterial system. The roads will likely be built with the development of Tract 3 unless they are identified as a CIP project.

There are also two collectors on the Thoroughfare Plan that will branch off of the arterial system to serve future land uses to the north and to the south, but are not necessarily intended to connect with Voss Road or Highway 6. Final alignments and possible connections will be determined based on future development needs.

Development opportunities and constraints

Area 4A is Imperial Sugar and 4B is Nalco. They are the only places in the City that are zoned as M-2 Heavy Industrial (other than the airport). Both sites are shown as Research/Industrial on the current Land Use Plan. Imperial backs up to established single family residential development. Nalco abuts a vacant Imperial owned tract, with Tract 3 lying to the north beyond that vacant area.

At the time we were preparing for the first public input period, the City was not aware of any plans that the owners of the Imperial Sugar site may have had (Area 4B) to either exercise their rights under the Heavy Industrial zoning, or to abandon the historically M-2 zoned use of the property. The area contains a small neighborhood park that needs additional area to function appropriately. When we were made aware of the intention of the property owners to change the land uses on the site, it became appropriate for the City to discuss various land use options with the owners and to solicit public input.

Nalco is currently in full operation and the City is not aware of any plans to cease or decrease the use. The use requires a transition area between it and any residential uses. Except for Imperial, this site is the only M-2 zoned area in the City of Sugar Land that will be available for heavy industrial use. If the use shows any indication of becoming discontinued in the future, the City may choose to study potential options for future reuse or redevelopment into a use other than heavy industrial.

Area 5 is Tract 3 and some adjoining parcels to the south, north, and east, including the older residential area in Mayfield Park. Area 5 contains many physical constraints. It is shown on the current Land Use Plan as Single Family with some commercial across from the Airport main entrance. Kempner High School fronts on Voss in the northern area, and a new TxDot sign shop facility exists along HWY 6. The northwest corner is located within the City Limits and is zoned B-2. A small single family subdivision was recently approved west of Burney Road across from Jess Pirtle, and a church was also recently

approved to locate a bit farther to the north. Mayfield Park is located in the southeast corner of the area just above the Imperial property. The remainder of the tract is not zoned because it lies outside of the City's zoning jurisdiction. The City intends to annex that property in the near future.

Most of Tract 3 is covered by the Airport Noise Impact District, and the western HWY 6 frontage is within the AZ-01 District, which currently restricts uses to nonresidential. The City of Sugar Land will be revising the airport districts in the near future.

There are multiple wetlands covering the tract and Oyster Creek winds through it. The entire center acreage bounded by the Creek is currently considered an overflow area and is thus undevelopable until significant changes are made to the drainage system. The WCID owns easements over and adjacent to the Creek, requiring the existing stream to remain in place. The natural areas could provide buffering between differing land uses.

Land uses near the area include well established single family across Burney Road – any new development in the eastern portion should occur with transitions to the existing neighborhoods. There are two apartment complexes and strip commercial located in the vicinity across Voss and HWY 6 outside of the City's jurisdiction. There may be pressure to continue this pattern on Tract 3. The property flanks the vacant Imperial property on two sides. This proximity, coupled with the airport constraints, does not render the southern area of the tract conducive to conventional single family residential development. Representatives from Nalco have likewise expressed concern that there be no residential uses immediately adjacent to their site.

Public input:

The City Staff and Council have heard preliminary plans from the Imperial Sugar owners to encourage redevelopment of the property, most likely for uses other than heavy industrial. Input from the general public was sought in the Fall of 2003 and early 2004. In May of this year, citizens participated in two public input meetings and offered the following input:

Mixed Use concepts

A recurring theme focused on the natural beauty and environmentally sensitive nature of the majority of the area. Citizens favored future development coupled with conservation strategies that would result in preservation, enhancement, and encouragement of passive recreational use of Gannoway Lake, Oyster Creek, and other natural greenways. Preservation of the Imperial Sugar buildings to redevelop as a mix of private and public uses was discussed and repeatedly supported in conjunction with the open space concepts.

Residential Uses

Many of the speakers expressed a strong opinion that any residential uses ought to be single family of a density and quality that is typically found in other single family residential areas of the City of Sugar Land. Any other housing style would likely be opposed, except perhaps in very small quantities to deal with otherwise

conflicting land use adjacencies. Some indicated that the condominium and live-work townhomes as proposed in the “mixed-use residential” category would not be acceptable. The category itself seemed to be confused with the “mixed use residential retail”. Any uses that would result in lower quality or higher density residential uses (such as standard apartment style development) would be opposed.

Retail Commercial Uses

Any retail use along Burney Road would be opposed. Retail in the form of light commercial (especially those that would be pedestrian oriented) may be tolerated near US 90A or State Highway 6 if included as part of a well-planned approach to creek preservation and enhancement.

Office and Light Industrial Uses

The area of greatest concern and interest seemed to be that nearest the Burney Road area. However, several people commented that those uses that further the City’s economic development interests should not be concentrated on the north side of the City (north of 90 A). Other input indicated that economic development uses may be acceptable if the uses are limited to those specific uses that the City considers among its “target industries”, if the buildings are well designed and of superior quality, and if the overall development is compatible with other existing and future uses in the vicinity.

The staff had a preliminary meeting at the beginning of the year with Imperial representatives, who expressed an interest in abandoning the heavy industrial use of the property, but more specific redevelopment plans have not yet been brought forward.

Planning and Zoning Commission Scenario for Areas 4A, 4B, and 5

The Planning and Zoning Commission’s Scenario involves a mix of future residential retail use on the Imperial site, Nalco site (for future redevelopment should the use be abandoned), and the creek frontage north of Oyster Creek to allow for a transition into the single family residential uses to the north and to allow creative redevelopment of the Imperial site and vicinity. The single family residential would continue north of the Burney Road Bypass and Oyster Creek, with light industrial uses along the Highway 6 frontage. There is an opportunity to create a new zoning district that lists the City’s target industries and incorporates buffering and design standards. This option should be studied under this scenario. Three tracts of retail commercial are shown on Highway 6 at the Voss, Burney Road Bypass, and Highway 90A intersections. More flexible residential uses would only be entertained in some areas if a proposed development is processed through the PD district and is beneficial to the community. The gross density for any residential area, inclusive of the buffers, should remain between 3 and 4 dwelling units per acre, which is the average gross density of the conventional suburban single family areas of the City. This scenario also shows a significant amount of green space over the areas that are likely to be wetlands, along Oyster Creek to allow for future trials, and in buffer areas to allow for transitions between land uses.

Recommendation:

Specific recommendations for land uses will be inserted when final policy direction is given. Other recommendations include:

- ❑ Continue to pursue options to retain the western half of Gannoway Lakes and explore options for surrounding areas through the Parks Master Plan update. Add a reference to the Parks Master Plan to the text.
- ❑ As a part of the Parks Master Plan update, study the potential for implementing a trail system along Oyster Creek.
- ❑ Any public/private partnerships that will preserve the Imperial buildings and rehabilitate them through adaptive reuse will be supported.

AREA 6

Area 6 is outside the City Limits east of Maranatha Farms. The current Land Use Plan shows the area as single family residential. The City owns one of the tracts; it contains a water treatment plant. The City has plans to expand that facility in the future. The Parks Department has expressed an interest in purchasing a future park site on the tract because a need for a community park now exists in the area. The Riverstone development will abut the area to the east and to the south. The approved General Plan for Riverstone shows townhome uses to the east and future residential/commercial mix to the south. Oilfield Road is shown as a major collector on the Thoroughfare Plan, although the road is substandard and does not meet minor collector standards.

Options for Area 6

Options include the following:

1. Show the entire tract as single family with public uses over the existing and future wastewater treatment facility.
2. Show the area as largely townhome. Show the existing and future City facility as public.

3. Show the area as planned residential with public on the west side of Oilfield Road.

Public Input:

There were three meetings where significant input was provided. At the meeting that took place in September 2003, there was general agreement between the residents and the property owner that the area should be developed single family residential, and that smaller lot sizes, perhaps even townhomes, might be acceptable to make development of the constrained property more feasible. The residents expressed their acceptance of residential, but they would prefer the property be used as park land or not develop at all. The property owner had proposed a small neighborhood commercial use at the intersection of Oilfield Road and a future east-west road to be located on the northernmost periphery of Riverstone. The residents were opposed to the commercial use. The attendees were concerned about the commercial uses already approved in the General Plan for Riverstone, and that a road would be built behind their tracts. The residents also expressed concern about the current condition of Oilfield Road, which is a substandard road, but is heavily used and is therefore deteriorating rapidly.

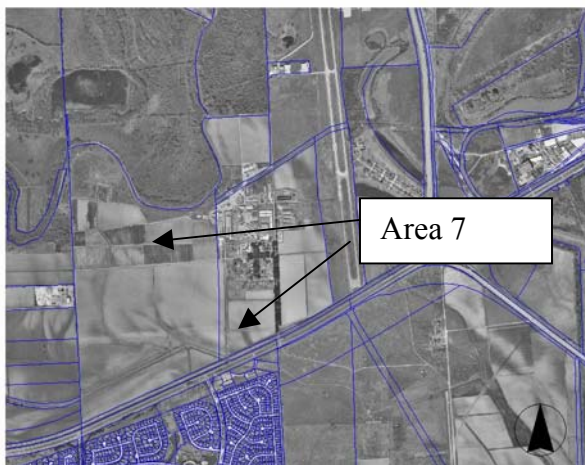
At the meetings that took place in March 2004, the area residents who spoke preferred a standard single family classification and indicated opposition to any other pattern that would result in densities higher than those in Sugar Land's typical single family areas.

Recommendation:

The area east of Oilfield Road should be shown as single family with a gross density of between three and four dwelling units an acre. The area west of Oilfield Road should be shown as public. Other recommendations include:

- ❑ The area should be annexed into the City prior to, or coinciding with, development approval.
- ❑ The area east of Oilfield Road is a potential community park site and should be included in the pending update to the Parks Master Plan.
- ❑ The western portion of the tract could be medium density single family if needed to properly transition between existing and future single family and the wastewater treatment facility.

AREA 7



Area 7 is Tract 2, which lies west of the Airport and is currently not accessible with the exception of one railroad crossing. A smaller sliver of land is located just south of the Airport between the runway and HWY 90A. It is currently shown as Institutional on the current Land Use Plan because it is still under the State Department of Corrections' ownership. Retail commercial uses are developed across 90A in New Territory. Land to the west and east is located within Houston's ETJ, and is rural. The area contains significant drainage challenges similar to those on Tract 3.

The easternmost sliver of land is desired to be a future expansion area for the Airport. Some of the tract is located within the AZ-01 zone and is therefore not considered conducive to residential or assembly uses; the area to the north and west is largely vacant prison property. The City is in need of additional M-1 zoning for uses such as the ones found in the Sugar Land Business Park. If accessibility and drainage can be improved to the remainder of the tract that is not needed for the Airport, the area would lend itself to commercial, office, warehousing, and light industrial uses.

Options for Area 7

Options include the following:

1. *Show the entire tract as single family residential with extensive buffering along HWY 90A and the railroad tracts. Noise attenuation and avigation easements would be needed in such a case.*
2. *Show the area as a future light manufacturing use.*

Public Input:

No public input was specifically sought on Area 7 due to the fact that there is no development pressure expected on that property in the foreseeable future. If the access is improved, making development more imminent and feasible, then a more detailed plan should be developed at that time with public input.

Recommendation:

The area could be shown as light industrial, but should not be approved for any type of development until adequate access and infrastructure have been provided.

E. APPLICATION, INTERPRETATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAP AND TEXT

The City of Sugar Land's Land Use Plan will act as a guide for future land use decisions, which are made during the zoning/rezoning and the general plan processes. Future rezoning and general plan approval should meet the general intent of the Land Use Plan, understanding that a developer's land plan and a single zoning category will be more specific than the City's Land Use Plan.

Any land use plan is intended to be general in nature, laying out a city's preference of future development patterns. Boundaries of uses should be interpreted to fall along future or existing roadways, waterways, wetlands, and rights-of-way. When known, lot lines might form boundaries as well, depending on site orientation. Existing developed areas are a bit more detailed because boundaries are fixed and land use decisions have been established. On raw land, the specific locations of uses with specific location criteria, such as parks, neighborhood commercial, and public uses cannot be determined until infrastructure is laid out. Those types of uses should be located using the Design Guidelines of this Chapter (Section D.)

The Land Use Plan should also be used to guide decisions for future major infrastructure needs. Thus the Land Use Plan information should be the base data that is input into the City's master plans. If the Land Use Plan changes, other plans should be reviewed. Major land use decisions that impact the Land Use Plan should result in a review of the Plan and all other master plans. The larger infrastructure serving needs that extend beyond those that are demanded by a proposed development can be provided with City participation by way of development agreements or through future Capital Improvements Projects (CIP). A CIP can also be identified in the future for areas where no development is proposed in order to meet imminent needs.

The Land Use Plan may contain uses that are not always supported by market demand. A variety of funding sources is available to aid cities in partnering strategies. These include, but are not limited to, Tax Increment Finance Districts, Brownfield Cleanup Fund, and the City's Economic Development program. Several of these implementation strategies have been discussed throughout the Land Use Plan update process. These options should be well researched in the future for applicability should the City elect to negotiate with developers to obtain certain public benefits that would not otherwise occur.